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UNDP ROLE IN ASSISTING DJIBOUTI, ETHIOPIA, KENYA, SOMALIA, THE SUDAN AND YEMEN

Report of the Administrator

1. In its decision 91/20 of 25 June 1991, the Governing Council requested that the Administrator, in close cooperation with the other organizations, in particular the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO), assist the efforts of the Secretary-General in mobilizing the necessary resources to meet the immediate needs of refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, the Sudan and Yemen. Furthermore, the Council requested that the Administrator assess the impact of the critical humanitarian situation on development efforts in the affected countries.

2. As a result of years of conflict, rapidly declining economies, collapsing infrastructures and erratic climatic conditions, most countries in the Horn of Africa are faced with acute crises which in toto have left almost 23 million persons threatened by disaster. For some countries in the region, such as the Sudan and Yemen, the 1991 Gulf crisis further exacerbated an already difficult situation. While the restoration of peace in Ethiopia after almost three decades of civil war offers many opportunities for recovery and development, conditions in Somalia and the Sudan continue to be difficult and future prospects uncertain. Djibouti and Kenya have borne a portion of the refugee burden resulting from instability in neighbouring States, and durable solutions for the refugees they are sheltering must be found immediately.

3. Concerns for the well-being of the people of the region have been expressed in a variety of resolutions, reports and appeals issued by the United Nations. In the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) report on the impact of the Gulf crisis on developing countries (DP/1991/60), the

significant impact of that crisis upon countries in the region was clearly described. The Gulf crisis compounded an already rapidly deteriorating situation in parts of the Horn of Africa, and by 19 July 1991 the Secretary-General called for an extensive and urgent emergency relief programme to aid almost 23 million persons affected by the disaster. This appeal led to a United Nations Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for the Special Emergency Programme for the Horn of Africa (SEPHA), requested by the Secretary-General on 16 September 1991 to emphasize the critical situation and the desperate needs of most of the countries of the Horn. The Secretary-General also established a special unit within the office of the Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Questions, Regional Cooperation, Decolonization and Trusteeship (SPQRCOT) to be staffed by representatives from United Nations agencies involved in relief operations. The Senior Adviser to the Administrator for Humanitarian Affairs was asked to lead the SEPHA unit reporting directly to the Under-Secretary-General.

4. On 19 September 1991 the Secretary-General reported further to the General Assembly on the problems facing Somalia and the actions taken to date by organizations of the United Nations (A/46/457). On 24 September, he issued a similar report on emergency assistance to the Sudan and Operation Lifeline Sudan (A/46/452). As a result of this report, the General Assembly adopted resolution 46/178 of 19 December 1991, in which it expressed its deep gratitude and appreciation to the States and intergovernmental organizations that are providing assistance to the Government and to the people of the Sudan and urged all parties involved to offer all feasible assistance to guarantee maximum success of the Sudan Emergency Operation in all parts of the country.

5. Given the conditions prevailing in the region and based upon the expressed concerns of the United Nations and the requests of the Governing Council, a considerable portion of UNDP efforts in the region are being devoted to fulfilling its emergency-related responsibilities. Principally, these responsibilities can be described under four headings: (a) the coordinating role of the Resident Representative/Resident Coordinator, as the Secretary-General's Special Coordinator for Emergency Relief Operations; (b) promotion of disaster prevention and preparedness plans and strategies; (c) linkage of relief to development; and (d) collaboration with UNHCR on the implementation of "durable solution" programmes for refugees and returnees.

6. The role of the Coordinator entails five broad categories of responsibility: (a) coordination of United Nations system activities for emergencies as well as for development; (b) establishment of a focal point for information compilation and dissemination about emergency needs, relief contributions and unmet requirements; (c) harmonization of relief efforts through regular meetings with government authorities, bilateral donor groups and non-governmental organizations (NGOs); (d) identification of gaps in relief programmes (e.g., displaced persons) that need to be filled; and (e) facilitation of efforts by Governments and the international community to provide emergency relief assistance.

7. Consistent with the role and responsibilities of UNDP and in line with Governing Council decision 91/17 of 25 June 1991, disaster prevention and preparedness activities are regarded as an important sphere of UNDP activity. Wherever possible, efforts are made to promote plans and strategies that seek to thwart disasters by preventive measures or, in the worst case, to mitigate the impact of disasters through preparedness measures.

8. In many instances disasters reflect the consequences of extreme poverty. An important role for UNDP, therefore, is to view disaster situations and subsequent relief efforts as platforms for development. UNDP Resident Representatives have recognized the need to look at relief operations as part of a continuum, from relief to recovery, rehabilitation and ultimately sustainable long-term development.

9. Recognizing the importance of the assertion of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees that the 1990s will be the "decade of returnees", UNDP, both in the field and at headquarters, has begun consultations with UNHCR about ways to achieve a more long-term approach to returnees' integration in their local communities. The Humanitarian Programmes, under the direction of the Senior Adviser to the Administrator for Humanitarian Affairs, have begun the process of providing suggested guidelines for the consideration of UNDP regional bureaux.

A. Djibouti

10. Djibouti was allocated $136,000 from Special Programme Resources (SPR) to strengthen an existing planning project to gauge the impact of the Gulf crisis and manage the economic adjustment required.

11. In response to Governing Council decision 91/21 of 25 June 1991, and on behalf of the Government of Djibouti, UNDP submitted to an international meeting in December 1991 proposals for five projects valued at $8.5 million. These projects are intended to revitalize the economy of Djibouti and include proposals for improving air transport services and aiding the recovery of date palm cultivation (the latter to address environmental as well as economic concerns).

12. UNDP is working closely with the Government to adjust its planning framework following the Gulf crisis. The Government has also requested UNDP to organize a round-table meeting in the second half of 1992 in order to mobilize donor support for the implementation of its development strategy in the 1990s.

13. In the meantime, UNHCR has been assisting the Government to ensure the well-being of over 90,000 Ethiopian and Somali refugees, an effort in which WHO has also joined.

B. Ethiopia

14. The Resident Representative/Resident Coordinator, as the Secretary-General's Special Coordinator for Emergency Relief Operations in Ethiopia, coordinates the United Nations response through the inter-agency United Nations Emergency Prevention and Preparedness Group (EPPG), which is partly funded by bilateral donors. The general functions of this position include organizing donor meetings and representing the United Nations in emergency relief matters. Added to these functions are three specific areas that relate to the relief-to-development continuum: (a) the national disaster prevention and preparedness strategy; (b) the early warning system; and (c) the food security reserve and the food and nutrition strategy.

1. The national disaster prevention and preparedness strategy

15. This strategy was designed initially with the cooperation of UNDP in collaboration with other United Nations offices and agencies, including the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator (UNDRO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), WFP and UNICEF. Before it is fully implemented, 14 studies have to be undertaken, of which 5 will be financed by UNDP (administrative structure review and analysis; training needs assessment; national emergency code; food security reserve; and an expanded early warning system). Originally responsibility for implementation of the strategy was with the Office of the National Committee for Central Planning, but following the recent change of government, responsibility has now been transferred to the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission. Three of the above-mentioned studies have already been completed and the last two, which have been subcontracted to national consultants, are expected to start in early 1992.

2. Early warning system

16. A UNDP/FAO study of the Government's early warning system was completed in February 1991. United Nations/EPPG contributes to the system through the United Nations/EPPG field officers' reports, which provide timely information on crop conditions in the regions. Furthermore, UNDP is supporting the National Meteorology Services Agency, which contributes directly to the early warning system by supplying rainfall data.

3. The food security reserve and the food and nutrition strategy

17. The transitional Government has agreed to the autonomy of the food security reserve and has stressed the need to decentralize the reserve in order to respond to urgent needs in the regions. The Government has also requested that a donors meeting be held to replenish the reserve and to establish donor support and confidence. The transitional Government is at the

same time reviewing the food and nutrition strategy in light of an overall policy review.

18. UNDP is currently considering opening a liaison office in Asmara, Eritrea.

C. Kenya

19. Until recently, Kenya had approximately 14,500 refugees of various origins. However, events in neighbouring countries have led to two new influxes, one from Ethiopia and the other from Somalia. The influx of Ethiopian refugees, mainly former military personnel and students, into northern Kenya, peaked at some 13,000 in mid-July. More than half this number have returned to Ethiopia.

20. The influx of Somalis into Kenya has continued to increase, reaching 42,000 by mid-August. Relative inaccessibility to the reception sites near the Somali border, as well as insecurity in the area, have made the delivery of relief assistance more complicated.

21. While UNHCR is supporting the Government's efforts to deal with the refugee population, in matters involving general emergency and development coordination, UNDP continues to fulfil its own role through, inter alia, secondment of staff and provision of essential support services. UNDP has provided its facilities to support the activities of United Nations specialized agencies, whenever so required; and when requested, UNDP has organized donor meetings to discuss conditions affecting emergency operations in Kenya.

D. Somalia

22. In light of the difficulties encountered by Somalia during 1990 and 1991, UNDP activities followed a two-pronged approach. The first re-established UNDP presence in Somalia, and the second assessed the needs and, based on the findings, developed new programmes of cooperation. These programmes will necessarily take into account the critical humanitarian situation and its impact upon development.

23. United Nations offices were opened in Mogadishu and Hargeisa in August 1991, but due to deteriorating security conditions, international staff members were able to stay inside the country for only relatively short periods of time. Nevertheless, most parts of Somalia were visited by the Resident Representative/Resident Coordinator, in his capacity as the Secretary-General's Special Coordinator for Emergency Relief Operations, and by United Nations inter-agency missions. These missions assessed the security and general conditions within areas visited, including damage caused by conflict and the economic situation. The most comprehensive of these missions was conducted between 26 June and 4 July by a United Nations inter-agency needs assessment mission, the findings of which were incorporated in the United Nations Secretary-General's Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for SEPHA.

24. Using funds made available from an emergency support project, UNDP is providing limited but essential support to the Special Coordinator for light aircraft, telecommunications and emergency consultants. This logistics and communications support is particularly important in light of the Special Coordinator's need to carry out responsibilities in Somalia whenever security conditions so allow. UNDP's coordinating function will develop further in the future in proportion to the support requirements created by the implementation of future humanitarian relief, recovery and reconstruction programmes.

25. UNDP is now preparing a two-year (1992-1993) rehabilitation and reconstruction programme for Somalia to be implemented when and where circumstances permit. UNDP is also funding a small project to rehabilitate classrooms in six schools in Hargeisa.

E. The Sudan

26. At the outbreak of the Gulf crisis, the economy of the Sudan was already experiencing substantial structural difficulties resulting from declining export income, drought and a long-standing civil war. The Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning estimated direct losses from the Gulf crisis at $1.185 billion, resulting from declining remittances, rising costs of imported goods, losses in export earnings and scaling down of development aid. The Government expended an estimated $7 million to mobilize transport for over 30,000 returnees from Jordan to the Sudan and an additional $2.7 million to transport returnees from Port Sudan to other parts of the country.

27. With the cooperation of UNDP, the Government formulated project proposals dealing with the specific returnee needs arising from the Gulf crisis. These include $636,000 for the purchase of land and agricultural machinery to help launch returnees as smallholders; $6.8 million to develop industrial estates and vocational training centres for returnee artisans; and $200,000 to help computerize the operations of the Bureau for Sudanese Nationals Working Abroad.

28. Given the serious drought facing the Sudan during 1990-1991, UNDP in cooperation with the Government, established a Special UNDP Drought Operation for the Sudan (SUNDOS) to initiate labour-intensive activities under food-for-work schemes. Through this programme, food is being provided to those who, due to lack of rainfall, would otherwise go hungry. This programme will lead to improved rural water supplies (e.g., dams, hafirs, wells), improved village-level infrastructures (e.g., school construction) and afforestation (by building nurseries and wind-breaks).

29. SUNDOS was allocated $15 million in indicative planning figure (IPF) resources in December 1990, and considerable emphasis is being placed on the role of NGOs and inter-agency collaboration, principally relying on the expertise of WFP and UNICEF. The World Bank will provide $1 million to the SUNDOS programme through cost-sharing.

30. Other efforts have been undertaken to build national capacity for emergency prevention and preparedness. A UNDP-funded project executed by FAO is enhancing the Government's forecasting capacity to give early warning of food shortages. Another important UNDP project is strengthening the capacity of the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission to plan for and respond to emergencies. Finally, a UNDP-supported initiative executed through WHO is strengthening the capability of the Ministry of Health to survey health levels and to organize the Government to respond to health emergencies at an early stage. In 1991, UNDP also funded the "1991 Baseline-Data Assessment Mission", in which representatives of the Government of the Sudan, United Nations agencies and NGOs participated. The purpose of the mission was to survey the health, agriculture, transport, water, sanitation, energy and urban affairs sectors, leading to a database to be used for a consolidated assessment of emergency relief and recovery needs for the country by the end of the year.

31. During 1990 and 1991, UNDP, through the Resident Representative/Resident Coordinator, as the Secretary-General's Special Coordinator for Emergency Relief Operations, played an active role in coordinating United Nations system emergency activities. Situation reports incorporating information from all United Nations agencies involved in emergency relief and recovery were disseminated fortnightly and regular weekly donors meetings and inter-agency United Nations Emergency Operations Group meetings were held. To assist the Special Coordinator, UNDP provided administrative support for the United Nations emergency unit which continued to serve as the Special Coordinator's secretariat for emergencies. Of special concern to the Special Coordinator was the facilitation of activities under Operation Lifeline Sudan, where relief needs were provided to civilian non-combatants in conflict zones in southern Sudan.

F. Yemen

32. In its decision 91/21 of 25 June 1991, the Governing Council requested the Administrator to prepare a programme to help revive the social and economic development of countries affected by the Gulf crisis. The document submitted for this effort to an international meeting in December 1991 contains a proposal for a $245 million programme for Yemen, of which $86 million in credits and grants would be provided through the World Bank-led Emergency Recovery Project (ERP) and associated activities. The programme provides assistance to returning migrant workers for: (a) construction of civil works and housing; (b) maintenance of production and employment in the agriculture and fisheries sectors; (c) creation of private sector activities; (d) extension of existing private sector activities; and (e) expansion of vocational training. To date, the World Bank has been able to mobilize $60 million in co-financing for an emergency recovery project within the ERP, including funding from the World Bank/International Development Association (IDA) ($33 million), United States Agency for International Development (USAID) ($15 million) and the Government of Germany ($4.5 million).

33. UNDP provided $400,000 from SPR funding to assist the Government's Project Management Unit which is coordinating the ERP. The Unit will help the Government to absorb and manage external funding.

34. UNDP is now working with the Government on a round-table process that will help prepare a plan, prioritize and define Yemen's needs and mobilize resources to meet those needs. Sectoral studies, reflecting priority needs, are now being conducted. The first meeting with donors is scheduled for May 1992 in Geneva.

35. A new UNDP country programme for the period 1992-1996 is being prepared which will, inter alia, assist the Government to build its capacity to prepare, plan and respond to emergencies and disasters more effectively.